

FREE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH.

Volume I.

LOUISVILLE, KY., THURSDAY OCTOBER 5, 1865.

Number

Has all Honor been Quenched in the Central Church, Chicago?

We are led to ask this question from a circumstance which has called forth a good deal of comment in the Northern papers, both religious and secular, and a glorification has been made over what turns out to be a fabrication, or as a friend expresses it, a pious fraud.

It seems that Rev. John W. Pratt, a Presbyterian minister from Alabama, recently visited the North, and was invited to preach in Chicago, by the veritable Fred. Brown, D.D., alias Paul the Apostle, in the opinion of the Chicago pastor. This minister from the South made his visit in July, which was not a great while after the General Assembly had given directions as to the proper treatment of Southern ministers, and of course it would be expected that Fred. Brown, D.D., would comply with the requirements of the General Assembly, and give no countenance to a "rebel" preacher, until he had fully satisfied him that he was a repentant one. It was, therefore, necessary that a story should be trumped up to satisfy Northern Christians (?) that the Assembly had acted wisely in its method of dealing with Southern ministers; that it would at once bring them to repentance, and this was a striking illustration of its potency in bringing this haughty rebel preacher to confession. So a "correspondent" is at once employed to send a batch of silly nonsense to the Cincinnati Gazette, and thence to be published to the world, that Dr. Pratt, a Presbyterian minister from the South, had made a full confession of his guilt and the guilt of the Southern people in their attempt to establish a confederacy.

But the most amazing thing of all is, that Dr. Pratt, Brown had not in his church a man with honesty enough to contradict a statement which every person who heard Dr. Pratt preach, knew to be untrue. It could hardly be expected that Dr. Pratt, Brown would contradict such a slander, but that there should not be one person in his church who had manliness enough to contradict the slander, reveals a sad condition of things, and shows that in that congregation all honor has indeed been quenched.

It will be seen by the letter of Dr. Pratt, that this slander followed him to his home, and which he is compelled to contradict himself, through the secular press. This is a repetition of Dr. Palmer's case, in New Orleans. We have received a letter from a friend, who states to us that Dr. Palmer says that the Boston correspondent's statement is a falsehood from first to last.

Who is safe from the foul slander of these correspondents, when such statements are allowed to go uncontradicted by those who know that they are false? We publish the letter of Dr. Pratt, and trust that those who have published the "correspondent's" statement will give it a place in their columns; and we think it ought to be a caution to ministers from the South to be more careful how they allow themselves to fall into the hands of such men as Dr. Fred. Brown, of Chicago.

Letter from Rev. J. W. Pratt.

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, Aug. 30, 1865.

To the Editor of the Register & Advertiser:

DEAR SIR:—In your issue of the 6th inst., I find a paragraph respecting myself, copied from the Cincinnati Gazette, purporting to give a true statement of the circumstances attending my preaching in the church of Rev. Dr. F. T. Brown, in Chicago, on the 16th of July last.

After correctly reporting the substance of Dr. Brown's remarks in introducing me, and the cordial welcome given to me by his entire congregation, the correspondent says: "In his sermon he said, 'I was honest; I thought we were right; and put all my money, power and influence into the Confederacy. But the Confederacy is gone; the theory of secession is exploded; slavery is dead, and I am content. God saw that we needed punishment and discipline, and has disciplined and punished us. I think we shall now be a better, happier, and more progressive people than heretofore.'"

Now, Mr. Editor, I uttered no such words. If there is anything I abhor, it is the dragging into the pulpit of any topic in the remotest manner connected with politics; and still more, anything connected with the preacher himself. The sermon I preached was first delivered in the Presbyterian Church of

For the Free Christian Commonwealth. The New York Observer.

The Observer has taken sides against the persecution in Missouri. We are not disposed to conceal our joy that it has done so. At the same time, we feel that some of its words are feeble, rather based upon what it deems expediency than founded upon right. It is to be hoped that when the Observer has a full appreciation of the real nature and significance of this matter, its language will be stronger and its positions more impregnable.

The Observer says if we were ministers in Missouri, we would have taken the oath, and protested against the right of government to exact it. This it deems to have been the wisest course. This is just what those have done who can discover no infringement of right—who hold that the arguments to sustain the British Parliament in controlling the Church of England have never been satisfactorily answered, and that it is an unsettled question whether the Presbyterians of Scotland were justified in resisting the encroachments of the crown. These did this from policy and fear of their congregations, and had such examples been followed, from any suggestions of earthly wisdom, the cause would have been surrendered, and refusal to take the oath would not have excited the fears of the Observer, that it may lead to a war, compared to which, the one just ended will be peace.

The Observer says it has not seen the oath, but understands there is no harm in it. We advise the editor to get it and study the application that is sought to be made of it. He will discover it to be something more than a test to determine the condition on which a man may hold and exercise the office of a minister. Viewed in this light simply, he says, the moment such a right is claimed our religious liberties are struck down, and we are at the mercy of the political majority of every Legislature. What will he say when he discovers that it is also the test of civil rights and immunities?

The Observer also remarks, that in no part of the country does the question of religious liberty appear to be so imperfectly understood as in Missouri. This were true if all knowledge were confined to such of its correspondents as think that past disloyalty of ministers justifies interference with the churches. But this is far from being the case. It will soon be manifest, if it is not so already, that we know our rights, and are determined to maintain them. We shall be glad to have the countenance of the friends of religious liberty everywhere, but even without it, we are prepared to endure whatever may be necessary, and shall rejoice if persecutions, trials and imprisonments arouse such general indignation as shall prevent similar tyranny in other sections.

The Observer hedges its fears of war, upon the course adopted by the Bishop of St. Louis. This is a poor foundation. We know that Bishops and Priests are but timid folk, and it is doubtful if the Bishop had issued his circular but for the stand made by the Presbyterians and other Protestants in behalf of religious liberty. If war ensue, it will be because the enemies of national rights shall be numerous and daring enough to resist the Constitution of the United States as the paramount law of the land.

We call the attention of the Observer to events now transpiring in our courts. The Judge of the criminal court of St. Louis, made an order prohibiting lawyers that had not filed the oath, from practicing in his court, and is now listening to arguments on a motion to rescind it. On the one side it is argued that the law demanding an oath conflicts with Sec. 10, Art. I, Constitution of the United States, in these words: No State shall pass any ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts. And also, that portion which guarantees trial by jury, and a republican form of Government. Our space does not allow us to detail these arguments. When the

counter-arguments are heard, of both, health, and desquitos church.—tation to the city of our Gu? Danville

not for tribings, about as church. el?" These "own," to the and the es past schism That the posi- e prin- nine-

the house of God, and denied to others the wide liberty they demanded for themselves.

We have penned the above in no fault-finding spirit. We repeat, we are glad the Observer has done as much as it has. We hope, however, it will go farther, and denounce the persecution in Missouri in unmeasured terms, giving Protestants the credit they are entitled to for resisting it. St. Louis.

For the Free Christian Commonwealth. As well expect the Mississippi to turn its course Northward as the General Assembly to recede."

So the strategists of the Western Presbyterian assure the world, in response to the action of the Louisville Presbytery, in their issue of Sept. 14th. Whether this opinion is given upon "principle or upon strategy," we are unable to determine. Considering, however, the zeal with which the Western Presbyterian has all along been laboring to persuade us that after all, the Assembly did not mean any thing by its utterances, we are inclined to interpret the editors strategically in this case, and as meaning simply to discourage the Louisville Presbytery in their efforts for reform.

Be that as it may, this metaphor of the Mississippi, as a type of unchangeableness, is certainly a singular one every way. True the general current of the Presbyterian Church in all ages, like that of the Mississippi, is in the same direction. But it is difficult to find a more striking type of the fickleness and changeableness which error and fanaticism imparts to the movement of the church, than the great American river, which not only "boxes the compass" in its course, within the distance of a few miles, but so perpetually changes its channel, that the pilot who this year undertakes to run the same channel as last year, finds himself high and dry upon a sand bar, or his boat spilt upon a "sawyer," and is coolly reminded, that *that* was the channel last year but not now. Nor is it difficult to point out any period in the history of the church wherein the turbid overflows of fanaticism have so completely reversed the course of the ecclesiastical current and changed the channel, as within the past four years.

The ecclesiastical Mississippi has, undoubtedly, by a very sharp turn, "changed its course Northward" within the last few years. Even the *Davville Strategist*, who labor to persuade us that we are still running in the old direction, and should steer the same channels, cannot but admit that during the late floods ecclesiastical, many large and luxurious banks have *ceded in*, on one side, and many bars have been formed on the other.

Now, we cannot understand why, if this Mississippi current has been changed so remarkably to the Northward, by the overflowing floods of fanaticism rushing into it, the Louisville Presbytery may not expect that, under the return of the Holy Spirit to the church, with His reviving influences, the flow may not be changed back to its wonted and proper direction, rather than another "bayou" be formed, and another additional channel opened through which to vent the increasing volume of spiritual power.

The Mississippi would never have occurred to us as a representative of the "Stream whose gentle flow Supplies the city of our Gu?"

Yet we are obliged to confess that, as descriptive of the American Protestant Evangelical Churches for four years past, Danville has conceived, not more poetically than truly, of the true type and representative, the Mississippi with its turbid, treacherous, fierce, destructive, all-changing, all-engulfing overflow. Nor less truly a type, after its flood subsides a little, of the ecclesiastical situation, with its acres of filth and slime spread over once beautiful gardens; with its pools of filthy water left to fester in the sun and generate the miasma, producing now the extreme of winter

of both, health, and desquitos church.—tation to the city of our Gu? Danville

not for tribings, about as church. el?" These "own," to the and the es past schism That the posi- e prin- nine-

tents of the church in Kentucky four years ago, and three-fourths of the church in Kentucky still. That they sold themselves, and deliberately plotted by "strategy," to sell the Kentucky Church to the Northern Apostates. Such men talking now of schism!! They need not be uneasy.

A Progressive Catechism.

An enterprising firm, in the city of brotherly love, and of the loving brothers, Musgrave and Janeway, intimated recently the possible forthcoming of a new Catechism.

From information in our possession, we have not the least particle of doubt that this new book will be fully "up to the times," side by side with the "deliverances on doctrine, loyalty and freedom," and a long way ahead of our present Catechisms, which must soon be consigned, in company with Dr. Wood's fossil, "Old and New Theology," to the care of the antiquary.

That our readers may share the enthusiasm of our own anticipations, and be on the *qui vive* for the appearance of this novelty, we give, unsolicited, the following as a specimen of what may be expected:

Question. What are the means of grace?

Answer. The Bible is one of them.

Q. Is the whole Bible a means of grace?

A. No—only those parts which each man likes.

Q. What portions do you like, and which are therefore means of grace to you?

A. All of it, except those passages which sanction slavery, and teach the eternity of punishment, and insist on faith in Jesus in order to salvation.

Q. Is there any other means of grace?

A. Yes. Sharp's rifles.

Q. Is there any other?

A. Yes. Political sermons.

Q. Can you mention another?

A. Yes. The Pennsylvania Railroad.

Q. What proof is there that the Pennsylvania Railroad is a means of grace?

A. The Editor of the Presbyterian Standard says so.

N. B. Applications for the Progressive Catechism," may be forwarded to Messrs. Nevins and Tilton, Presbyterian Standard Office, Philadelphia, Penn.

For the Free Christian Commonwealth. Ecclesiastical Nomenclature.

MESSRS. EDITORS: The marvelous doings of the last four years in the Protestant Churches seem to have effaced all the ancient land marks that distinguished between the different views and policy of parties in all the Protestant Churches. The distinction of High Church and Low Church, Conservative and Radical, and even Old School and New School no longer express the issues which now agitate the Churches. In the all-absorbing political and military issues to which the Churches have been devoting their chief attention, High Church and Low Church are found standing upon the same platform. The Vintons, the Coxes, the Tyngs speak the same "Loyal" and Humanitarian language. The Conservatives and Radicals of former times, as the Wolf and the Lamb of millennial times, lie down together—the Hodges, the Rices and the Elliots, with the Monforts, the Rankins and the Fullertons. Even Old School Woods and New School Thompsons are hard at work to throw a suspension bridge over the chasm created by the ecclesiastical earthquake of 1837.

Manifestly we must have new terms to express the new distinctions, if we would hope to speak or write of ecclesiastical affairs without endless circumlocutions. By way of first essay it occurs to me to suggest terms descriptive of the three great classes into which the late revolution seems to have divided the Protestant Churches.

The most numerous and powerful party which now controls all the evangelical Protestant Churches in the North, may appropriately be denominated the "Saturnian" party. Their thirst for blood, their rage against the martyrs who suffer for the truth, and their recklessness of truth, their zeal to uproot all the old foundations of the Church as Christ's spiritual kingdom, all mark them as the same class of thinkers of whom the Saviour said, "Ye are the children of your father the Devil," and John declares, "the Devil is 'a liar and a murderer from the beginning.'"

Apparently in contrast with this class, and yet without any zeal for the true principles of ecclesiastical rule, is another class who, borrowing a hint from your own paper, may be appropriately termed "the Celestials." Their views of religion are too sublimated to allow it to come in contact with the rough toil and sweat of those who are contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, on the one hand, or on the other hand to come into the secret of the fierce men of blood who are persecuting and saying all manner of evil against the martyrs. Hence they can go with neither party, but rather

The day is coming when, if you had a thousand worlds, you would give them all for a "hiding place."

shrink in holy horror from both. They dislike the malignity chiefly because it is inexpedient to express it. They would defend the truth against error, but would do it rather by strategy, and beat the errorists with their own tricks. The "Celestials," indeed, occasionally can indulge with the "Saturnians" in a good deal of hate, but for the credit of religion it should be clothed in the garb of brotherly love. While on the other hand, the "Saturnians" can affect the tone of the "Celestials" whenever it will better serve their purpose. But aside from this exceptional agreement, they are antagonistic parties.

The third class in the Protestant Churches, might properly be denominated "Non jurors," "Covenanters," or "Puritans," had not those names already been appropriated in old controversies in the Church; or "Conservatives," "Old School," or "Free Church," had not these terms already been appropriated to other issues. The "Anti-secularists" might be an appropriate designation for that class in all the Protestant Churches who resist the general tendency to prostitute the Church and her ordinances to secular ulterior interests.

Rev. W. Y. Brown and the First Church of Nashville, Tennessee.

"The Rev. W. Y. Brown, of Washington, District of Columbia, has received a call to Shelby, Ohio. He has declined the appointment of the Board of Domestic Missions to Nashville, Tennessee."

The above item we find in the "Ecclesiastical Record" of the Presbyterian. We would like to know what it means by saying, that Rev. W. Y. Brown has declined the appointment of the Board of Domestic Missions, to Nashville, Tennessee. In what capacity was Rev. W. Y. Brown to labor in Nashville—as a missionary at large, or as a supply to one of the Churches of that city? We have been under the impression, that the Churches in Nashville were all supplied with ministers, and have been for some months past, and yet it is only at this late day, that we are told by the *Presbyterian*, that this appointment has been declined.

We remember to have seen, immediately after the meeting of the General Assembly, an item, which went the round of the papers, to the effect, that Rev. W. Y. Brown had been appointed by the Board of Missions at Philadelphia, to supply the 1st Church in Nashville, Tennessee. But we learned soon after that announcement was made, that the 1st Church of Nashville had engaged a minister of its own choosing. We also heard it stated that Rev. W. Y. Brown had visited Nashville about that time, probably under that appointment from the Board of Missions. If so, the appointment was not confirmed by that Church, for the Session had already engaged a supply for the pulpit, and he was on the ground. If the *Presbyterian* knew these facts, would it not have been better for it to have said, that the 1st Church of Nashville did not desire the services of Rev. W. Y. Brown, or else have said nothing about it at all?

For the Free Christian Commonwealth. Proselyting by "the other Branch."

DEAR COMMONWEALTH: In these times of the abounding of brotherly love, between the two branches, *alias* Old School and New School, it may be interesting to note such tendencies to union as the following: Some three or four months ago, an apostle of "the other branch," whose headquarters are at Alton, Illinois, made a tour of inspection through the Western part of our State, and stopping a few days in Kansas City, was much pleased with its present and future prospects, but grieved that it possessed no church organization of the New School order. He attempted to remedy the evil by the following statement. He made himself known to members of the Old School, as a *Presbyterian Clergyman*. Being destitute of a pastor, and of the regular ministrations of the word, they were greatly delighted with his presence, and invited him to preach for them. After remaining several days, and holding pleasant social intercourse with most of the members, he bade them an affectionate farewell, promising, however, to return after a brief visit into Kansas. On his return, after a little more maneuvering, to the astonishment of the brethren, he revealed to them the fact that he was not *exactly* of their order, but belonged to the "other branch," and was desirous of effecting an organization of his order in their city. To a worthy deacon he said, "you want for an Elder." The arguments employed by him with the aforesaid deacon and all the leading members of the church, to induce them to make the change, were as follows:

1. There is little or no difference between the two branches.

2. In a very short period the two branches will be united.

3. They have a surplus of funds in the treasury of the Board of Missions, and would afford them material aid in supporting a pastor.

The majority of the Old School brethren could not "see it." If there is so little difference between them, and if the union is to be effected so speedily, why, they asked, make the change?

For the Free Christian Commonwealth. Rapid progress of Unchristian Loyalty at Danville—Dr. Yerkes advises a young Minister in Missouri to subscribe the Oath.

Doubtless many of the friends of Dr. Yerkes will be pained, some of them, perhaps, surprised, to learn that he has at last taken a step which places him abreast with Drs. Stanton, Janeway, Monfort, etc., in the vanguard of the Radical march. Writing to a young brother, a former pupil, in Missouri, who had respectfully sought his counsel, he advises him to swallow—*sans cere-monie*—the iron-clad oath of that State. This, it would seem, goes to confirm the statement made a few months ago by a correspondent of the "Banner," that the "Western Presbyterian" had, from prudential considerations, adopted a course of "progressive loyalty." Notwithstanding this painful fact has been commented upon more than once in the columns of the "Free Christian Commonwealth," no denial or explanation of the charge, so far as we know, has yet appeared. Whether this mysterious silence should be accepted as the confession of guilt, or the contempt of injured innocence, many are at a loss to decide. Many were loth to believe that a man like Dr. Y., occupying such an exalted station of honor and trust in the church, and esteemed so highly for his piety and learning, could be led so far astray by the prevalent fanaticism of the day, as to adopt a course so thoroughly Jesuitical. Even supposing, however, that the statement of the "Banner's" correspondent was correct; that Dr. Yerkes, in his editorial capacity, had indeed adopted such a course of Jesuitical double-dealing as he describes, reconciling it by some occult species of casuistry to his editorial conscience, we did not suspect that his "progressive loyalty," would ever reach the fearful development indicated in the caption of this article. Such, however, we are informed, is the case, and upon the progressive loyalty hypothesis, it is a sad illustration of the demoralizing effects of such a course of journalistic trickery and double-dealing. It is possible that in thus giving to the public, opinions of Dr. Yerkes, which he himself has thought it best not to publicly profess, we may hasten the denouement promised by the correspondent of the "Banner," when Dr. Yerkes is to lay aside his mask, and boldly avow his "cordial agreement and sympathy with the Assembly," in all its deliverances touching slavery and politics. If Dr. Y.'s advice to the young minister in Missouri, is good advice, then he ought to give all the brethren in that unhappy State the benefit of it. We shall expect him to come out in the columns of the "Western Presbyterian," and give them all the reasons why and wherefore they should subscribe the test oath.

For the Free Christian Commonwealth. Proselyting by "the other Branch."

DEAR COMMONWEALTH: In these times of the abounding of brotherly love, between the two branches, *alias* Old School and New School, it may be interesting to note such tendencies to union as the following: Some three or four months ago, an apostle of "the other branch," whose headquarters are at Alton, Illinois, made a tour of inspection through the Western part of our State, and stopping a few days in Kansas City, was much pleased with its present and future prospects, but grieved that it possessed no church organization of the New School order. He attempted to remedy the evil by the following statement. He made himself known to members of the Old School, as a *Presbyterian Clergyman*. Being destitute of a pastor, and of the regular ministrations of the word, they were greatly delighted with his presence, and invited him to preach for them. After remaining several days, and holding pleasant social intercourse with most of the members, he bade them an affectionate farewell, promising, however, to return after a brief visit into Kansas. On his return, after a little more maneuvering, to the astonishment of the brethren, he revealed to them the fact that he was not *exactly* of their order, but belonged to the "other branch," and was desirous of effecting an organization of his order in their city. To a worthy deacon he said, "you want for an Elder." The arguments employed by him with the aforesaid deacon and all the leading members of the church, to induce them to make the change, were as follows:

1. There is little or no difference between the two branches.

2. In a very short period the two branches will be united.

3. They have a surplus of funds in the treasury of the Board of Missions, and would afford them material aid in supporting a pastor.

The majority of the Old School brethren could not "see it." If there is so little difference between them, and if the union is to be effected so speedily, why, they asked, make the change?

To this question, the third argument was repeated. The proposed assize could not be afforded while they remained with the Old School. Communion unnecessary. Yours truly, Missouri

For the Free Christian Commonwealth. The Presbytery of St. Louis on the General Assembly.

The Committee on the Minutes of the General Assembly, are constrained, by the necessarily limited time they have for an examination of such voluminous minutes, to omit reference to much that is of importance, and to report by no means in detail, in regard to items in the Assembly's proceedings, about which Presbytery cannot be silent.

I. We call the special attention of Presbytery to the 24, 4th and 5th resolutions, on page 545, exhorting parents to consider renewably and prayerfully, their duty to the Lord, in training their children for His service in the gospel ministry—recommending to our congregations the establishment of parochial schools—and setting apart the last Thursday in February next, as a day of prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our children and youth.

II. We express our most earnest dissent from the Assembly's action on the records of the Synod of Kentucky. 1st. Because every church court and every church member have the right, both to hold an opinion in regard to ecclesiastical legislation, and to express that opinion in such terms as self-respect will permit and truth and righteousness may demand. And any invasion of this right, is to lord it over God's heritage. 2d. Because the Assembly's censure of the Synod of Kentucky for failing to make a political deliverance, is a condemnation of fidelity to the Constitution of the Church, and to solemn-ordination vows, in accordance with which Synods shall handle nothing but what is ecclesiastical.

III. The General Assembly adopted the following resolution, and directed it as an order to the Board of Domestic Missions, viz:

"Resolved, 4. That none be appointed but those who give satisfactory evidence of their loyalty to the national government, and that they are in cordial sympathy with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, in her testimony on doctrine, loyalty and freedom."

The judgment of the Presbytery of St. Louis, in regard to this order, is clearly expressed by the *Protest*, found on pp. 588-589. [We have already published this protest.—*Ena*]

IV. On pp. 560-1. We find the Assembly's action in view of Overture No. 6, asking the Assembly to drop from its roll the names of certain Ministers, Presbyteries and Synods, in the so-called Confederate States.

And on pp. 562-3-4, may be seen the Assembly's deliverance in answer to Overture No. 7, inquiring what course ought to be pursued in regard to the admission of ministers known to be disloyal, or suspected of it.

It is the opinion of this Presbytery,—1st. That the Assembly's utterances in reply to these two Overtures are not borne out by FACTS: What the Assembly alleges to have been the causes and motives influencing our Southern Brethren in setting up a separate organization, are, to say the least, misconceptions. 2d. The said utterances establish a new term of membership in the Church and of standing in the ministry, contrary to the Word of God and the Confession of Faith. "In making the views, or opinions or feelings, or even practice, of men in the matter of slavery, or their particular sentiments touching the subject of loyalty, a condition of recognition or admission as members of the church, or as ruling elders and ministers in the church, and a condition *sine qua non*, the Assembly has, in our judgment, and as Dr. Hodge expresses it, 'violated the Constitution of the Church and usurped the prerogatives of its Divine Master.'"

3d. The said utterances will have the necessary effect to destroy, rather than build up; which sad result is, in our judgment, fully and justly set forth in part III. of the *Protest*, page 583.

V. In the deliverance on the State of the Country, pp. 563-6, as also in other formal papers, the Presbytery regret to see no check to the Erastian policy which has wrought such havoc in the church during the last four years, and no abatement of that recklessness of assertion and that harshness of spirit, which have caused the enemies of Zion to rejoice, and even called forth, on the floor of the Assembly, a biting rebuke from one of its most respected members.

VI. On page 543, we find the Assembly's decision on two complaints—one from a member of this body—the other from a church under our care—both of them against the Synod of Missouri, for having refused to members admission to that body and participation in its proceedings. This decision was based upon a mere technicality; and even that technicality was mythical, as appears from the sworn testimony, furnished by the complainants, and which was the only record or evidence before the Assembly.

Christ's servants should teach others what Christ has commanded, not command others what Christ has taught.

It has been well suggested that people's excuses for neglecting duty, are not generally their reasons for such neglect. The excuse is very commonly the method of concealing the true reason.

Free Christian Commonwealth.

Conducted by an Association of Ministers.

A. DAVIDSON, Agent and Publisher.

LOUISVILLE, KY., THURSDAY, OCT. 5, 1865.

Declaration and Testimony of Louisville Presbytery and others against Erroneous and Heretical Doctrines current in the Presbyterian Church.

In our last issue, we laid before our readers in full, by means of a supplement, this very important document. The "Act and Testimony" of 1837, is the counterpart, and in substance, which it testifies against the same errors, and in the same manner, as the "Declaration and Testimony" of 1865. At the time of this writing, our readers will have had full time to read and reflect upon it; they will, therefore, be prepared to receive intelligently, and judge candidly, the few suggestions we now offer on the whole subject.

This declaration is, in general terms, a solemn protest against the new principles concerning the duty of the Church to the State, and the power of the State over the Church, introduced in the Assembly of 1861, and developed through the succeeding four years to their culmination in the Assembly of 1865. It declares these principles to be heretical to such a degree, that by them "the whole mediatorial glory and dignity of the Messiah, and all the offices of Prophet, Priest and King, which he exercises for the salvation of his people are subverted and surrendered."

By way of exposition and elucidation of this general indictment, fourteen specifications are cited, out of the acts and utterances of the Assembly, from 1861 to 1865, viz: The doctrine of the Assembly, that Church Courts are competent to decide upon questions of State policy; the doctrine that the Church, as such, owes allegiance to human rulers or governments; the doctrine that the Scriptures, in enjoining subjection to the higher powers, teach the duty of "passive obedience" to any and every act of tyrants; the semi-infidel humanitarian doctrine of the slavery minute of 1864, in face of the previous solemn judgments of the Assembly; the calumnious imputation upon the church's previous labors for the evangelization of the negroes in face of her own recorded testimony on the subject; the shaping and conforming of the church's acts and deliverances to the civil and military policy of secular rulers; the blasphemous perversion of Providential events as a means of interpreting God's word; the sanction by the church, of the usurpations of the civil and military power over the ordinances of worship and government in the church; the practical alliance of the church with the State; the persecution of the witnesses for the truth against these errors; the perversion of the Gospel commission to preach the Gospel to secular and parizan purposes; the outlawry of the Southern Churches on a false charge touching their motive and purpose in withdrawing from us; the setting up of an ecclesiastical Star Chamber above the Presbyteries in the Board of Missions; and finally, against movements looking prospectively to an utter confounding of Church and State, or subordinating one to the other.

These errors are testified against as contrary to the word of God and subversive of its inspiration and authority; contrary to the constitution and symbols of the church; contrary to the Divine ordinance specially sundering the spiritual from the secular government; contrary to the good name and influence of the church in society; contrary to peace and fellowship among brethren of the same household, both ecclesiastical and political; and contrary to the unity and purity of the Church of God.

Such are the substantial points of this document. That it will cause a general howl among the fanatical radicals who have obtained a temporary ascendancy in the church; a trembling uneasiness among the good but timid men whose love for the truth is held in subjection by their fears; and grave doubts and exceptions among the advocates of expediency and compromise as the great weapon for defence of truth, we can readily imagine. That the wiser and more courageous witnesses for the truth, will rejoice that a standard has at last been lifted up against the enemy coming in like a flood; and that, in time to come, all good and true sons of the church will look back to this Declaration and Testimony, as they have been wont to look back to the "Act and Testimony" with reverence and high satisfaction, we most confidently believe.

The issue having thus been joined between the conservative witnesses for the truth and the innovating radicals in the church, it may be well to fix attention on the real points involved in the struggle: the more so, because both the passion and the imbecility to which the radical organs of the church seem to have been given over, incapacitate them to comprehend, even if they intended to state fairly, the nature and results of the controversy. The disgraceful, but characteristic littleness of the attack upon Louisville Presbytery touching its adoption of this paper, from Danville in

alliance with the pitiable little composition of self-conceit, notoriety-hunting, and wrong-headedness who constituted the minority of one in the Presbytery; the intimations in the organs of different factions of the radical party, that a schism is in process of hatching in Kentucky; and the comforting assurance that the parties engaged in it can "be readily spared" from the church, all indicate clearly enough, both the incapacity of these men to comprehend the nature of the struggle thus begun, and the spirit in which they will carry on the warfare.

Now, all such antagonists may at once make themselves easy, under the assurance, that the authors and signers of the "Declaration and Testimony" have not the remotest intention of constituting a "schism," or of being "spared" from the church of their fathers. So far from any dark, mysterious, strategical ambiguities in their utterance, they declare with singular boldness and plainness, their purpose to be the reformation, not separation from the church, as in the following language:

"By the blessing of God upon our efforts in this behalf, we shall not despair of so rallying the friends of a Pure and Free Church around the banner which God has given us 'to be displayed because of the Truth,' as to be able to defeat, in a great measure, the schemes of those who seem by their acts to be hating and hating the beautiful and holy temple of our fathers. Raze it, raze it, even to the foundations thereof."

"We declare our deliberate purpose, trusting in God, who can save by few as well as by many, to use our best endeavors to bring back the church of our fathers to her ancient purity and integrity, upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, and of our only King, Priest and Prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ. In this endeavor we pledge ourselves to assist and co-operate with each other."

"If a majority of our church are against us, (as we have too much reason to apprehend it is,) they will, we suppose, in the end, see the infatuation of their course, and retrace their steps; or they will at last, attempt to cut us off. If the former, we shall bless the God of Jacob; if the latter, we desire to stand ready, for the sake of Christ, and in behalf of the testimony now made to endure whatever suffering may be required of us by our Lord."

This solemn and earnest language is of itself the most effective rebuke of the miserable twaddle of strategists and imbeciles concerning dark plots of schism by men "who can be spared." If the Lord in His just anger has not given the church over to hopeless apostasy, we confidently expect the church "readily to spare" the real schismatics who have brought the present ruin upon her, and let them "go to their own place"—that common sewer of corrupt mongrel Yankee Presbyterianism—known as New-Schoolism. It was doubtless anticipated, if not primarily intended, by the leaders of the Assembly at Pittsburgh, that their measures would force into stout resistance and ultimate withdrawal from the church, the body of men whose courage and conscience made them formidable antagonists, and thereby leave them to the easy task of subjugating the consciences of the timid, compromising, passive body of "ecclesiastics" who might remain among them. But they altogether misjudged and mistook the men who opposed them. Their opposition grew out of their love for the old church and her constitution, and their practical doctrine is not secession, but battle for the rights as the children of their fathers under the constitution of their fathers. If they are vanquished in that battle and "cast out," then the schism is not of their making; and the very process of casting them out will send the true church with them.

A word or two concerning the bearing of this struggle upon the question of the re-union of the severed parts of the church, may not be out of place here. For manifestly it has a very obvious, though indirect bearing upon that question, as the recent developments of a true policy in the Episcopal Church, in striking contrast with the ineffably foolish and wicked policy of the Pittsburgh Assembly shows.

Most opportunely for the Episcopal Church North, the venerable Hopkins, of Vermont, was in an official position at the close of the civil war, to extend the olive branch to his brethren in the South, and did so in a letter which is likely to shed a lustre on his name that may well seem to him a glorious compensation for all the calumnies of his fanatical brethren in Pennsylvania. In response to this kind call from one in whom they could specially confide, the yearnings of fraternal affection, were at once awakened in the hearts of his brethren—some as their hearts were—and already from Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Arkansas and Texas, has gone forth an utterance which settles practically the point, that the severed Episcopal Church of the United States shall speedily be one again. If in like manner the Assembly of 1865—met at the close of the civil war—had been inspired with the spirit of the Master, rather than with that spirit of semi-infidel humanitarianism, which had already wrought out so much evil, then would the Presbyterian Church have been as speedily reunited, and no such "Declaration and Testimony" had been needed. For grave as had been the errors of previous Assemblies up to that time, the return of the spirit of brotherly kind-

ness, made the means, by the Spirit of God, of a revival of love for the truth and of casting out the humanitarian heresy, would have healed the backslidings of the church without the necessity of further strife.

But the murderous spirit of the Pittsburgh Assembly, has compelled the friends of union and of truth, even as a measure of Christian expediency, over and above the considerations of duty to testify against error, to make this solemn declaration against the heresies that caused the separation, by way of preliminary assurance to their Southern brethren, that if the yearnings of their hearts for the old church of their fathers prompt them to return, they will find there still brethren who are ready to unite with them in the struggle for the truth, against fanaticism, as in days of yore. In this aspect of the case—and only in this aspect of it, has the Declaration and Testimony an immediate bearing on the question of separation.

We have already extended our remarks beyond the proper limits of one article, and yet we cannot conclude without a few brief hints to our more timid brethren, concerning their duty in the present crisis:

1. It is very doubtful whether there is not a majority in the church, who in heart endorse generally the principles of this Declaration and Testimony; and, therefore, it needs only outspoken plainness of speech and courageous action to relieve the church of the evil influences which now oppress her.

2. It is not a question of going out with a small "schism," as our enemies will pretend, but a question of reforming the church. The real issue is, will you aid in getting the church back to her old conservative ground, and thereby prepare for re-union with our separated brethren, who hold the like precious faith with us.

3. It is no just ground for declining to co-operate in this movement, that there may be minor statements or views in the details of the "Declaration and Testimony" to which you take exception. It is the trick of errorists, and particularly of errorists of the New England type, to get, first, an emasculated statement of the differences between truth and error; and then to secure a compromise upon points of comparative unimportance, whilst the main points and those the vital ones, are really given up. But let it be borne in mind, that the simple question now submitted, and which you are called upon to decide, is, are you in favor of a reform of the abuses and a suppression of the heresies generally indicated in this paper.

4. It can surely no longer be pleaded that this movement is pre-emptive. Ever since 1861, the bolder friends of the truth have listened to the plea, wait, wait! Had their counsels been followed even as late as 1862, it is probable that the action of 1864 and 1865 would not have been taken by the General Assembly, nor the godless action of the State of Missouri have silenced practically the gospel there—nor many of the persecutions have been inflicted upon God's people, over which we mourn.

5. Moderatism, be it remembered, has ever been the peculiar hane of the Presbyterian Church, as witness her history in Scotland in successive centuries past. The most dangerous enemies of the truth are not the open enemies who boldly assail her, but the treacherous friends who from fear or love of ease, or indifference betray her in the hour of battle.

6. The method suggested of showing how every office-bearer stands on this great question, by giving his adherence to this "Declaration and Testimony," is simple, direct, and every way fair. Better than any other mode of expression does it enable the friends of truth to know each other. It was eminently successful in 1837. We trust it will prove as successful now.

Celestial brethren in Kentucky kindly invited out of the Church.

We find in the *Presbyter*, of Sept. 20th, the following very significant hints: "Our brethren in Kentucky, who have for four years past, been laboriously justifying themselves and destroying the confidence of the people in their sincerity, by vain efforts to soothe the 'Satanic' cerberus in the Church with a sop."

Taken in connection with the *Presbyter*'s hint, that there are those in Kentucky "whom we can readily spare," we are led to conclude that the Northern brethren are becoming rather anxious to get rid of Kentucky, doubtless on the ground that one part of the church there will be hard to manage, while the remainder—the strategists—which could be managed, is a sort of material hardly worth keeping. Says the *Presbyter*:

"The great conflict in our church in Kentucky will occur in the Synod, which is to meet on Wednesday, Oct. 11th, in the city of Louisville. The result is doubtful. The parties are nearly equally divided. We hope that the questions at issue will be fully understood, and that each man will go for his principles. It will be a great damage to our church if in this division in Kentucky, men remain with us who are not with us in sentiment and spirit. The views of the church are expressed in the action of the Assembly from 1861 to 1865. They are plain documents, and there is no need of misunderstanding them. It is

not to be desired that those who charge that in these acts the church has become apostate, should remain in our fellowship, as they will feel it to be their duty to keep up agitation. We want peace, and it can be found only in separation. We ought to take it for granted that those who differ from us, are honest in their opinions, and that they have the right to act upon their convictions."

If all who are anxious to adhere to our church in Kentucky had taken a decided stand, and had thrown aside all strategy three years ago, the division would have been on principle. As it is, we fear that not a few will adhere to our Assembly who are at heart opposed to our noble deliverances on the war and on slavery; and that they will find themselves away from home, and we shall find among us brethren who do not confide in us, and whose sentiments we repudiate."

A Church with Church enough and to spare.

The *Presbyter* of Sept. 16th, seeks to evade the force of our view of the "situation ecclesiastical," by the petty trick of contrasting it, as a "false and foolish judgment" in one extreme, with the twaddle of some simpleton "correspondent" on the other extreme, touching a prayer meeting in Nashville; and, in contradiction to our general statement of the decline of our cause at the principle centres of influence at the North, avers that "a brief comparison of statistics will show that more persons were added to these decaying and disorganised churches by a profession of faith in Christ in 1864, than in 1857."

Moreover the *Presbyter* regards our remarks as "foreshadowing a schism," which he would have it understood his friends are prepared for, and by way of anticipation, administers the consolation "that it will be mainly confined to Kentucky if it is consummated, and will carry from us only those whom we can readily spare."

It is but an additional proof of the general decay and feebleness of the Presbyterianism of the North, that an editor of one of its respectable organs should so utterly misconceive the spirit of the article in question, and the spirit it now rising in the church, as to imagine that a quibble or trick of this sort may pass for a solid answer to so grave an argument.

Our statement of the condition of the Northern Churches, was not made at random, but on well collated statements from some of the ablest pastors in that field. Nor can we discover any reason for making the general view of Presbyterianism, in the statistics of its decline, a subject for a quibble, in the statistics of its decay. The *Presbyter*'s suggestion, we have made reference.

For the statistics, if worth anything at all on the subject of our argument, reveal the sad fact, that to five of the oldest, wealthiest and best appointed of our churches in New York City, with its million and odd of population, there were added in the year 1864, just twenty-five on profession of faith. And yet these are the congregations that have grown up under the life-long ministrations of such great lights in the church as Drs. Spring, Phillips, Polts, Krebs and S. D. Alexander! We wish it understood, however, that this argument from "figures that cannot lie" is not ours, nor a fair one in our judgment, but simply the *Presbyter*'s argument retorted. Our view of the Northern Churches was not gathered from the statistics which, for any logical purposes, do lie most egregiously, but from long and careful watching of the development of the spirit that animates them. Singularly enough, on the same page with this "clair de lune" picture of the prosperity and advance of the Northern Church, we find a correspondent calling attention to the sad fact that the deaths in our ministry, in 1864, were sixty-four as against only fifty-four new candidates for the ministry under the Board of Education; thus indicating a gradual extinction of the ministry itself!

We are not, however, to enter into any controversy upon such a subject. It gives us no pleasure to dwell upon the sad evidences of declension and depletion in the church. The general tone of the public journals and of leading public men of the country, as well as the private expressions of sorrow and discouragement from the more thoughtful pastors of the church attest but too indisputably the correctness of our general statement.

But if further evidence were needed, what could be more conclusive evidence of general declension, than the professional readiness of a respectable journal in the church "to spare" a part thereof, in the consciousness of exuberant strength? It was cited as the conclusive proof of declension in a church, by the Lord and Head of the Church himself. "Thou sayest I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Whether the *Presbyter*'s readiness "to spare" a part of the church in Kentucky be understood in the sense of insulting bravado, or of real conviction, it is equally indicative of the very state of declension which he so angrily denies. For if understood in the former sense, it implies a degree of reckless passion and malignity of heart that treats the communion of saints with contempt; if in the latter, a degree of

ignorance or weakness of head that is incapable of appreciating the importance of the communion of saints as a prime article of Christian faith and practice; and, therefore, the impossibility of avoiding the disintegration of the church.

We deem it scarce worth while to add, that our view of the "situation ecclesiastical," neither intended nor pretended to "foreshadow schism" of any sort, unless it be that indirectly, a schism shall be made by the *Presbyter* and his friends, in consequence of the restoration of the church to her ancient faith and practice. Nor need we waste time upon the question of the *Presbyter*'s sincerity and consistency in warning the Southern Churches two weeks previously against the error of schismatically continuing a separate body, as contrasted with this present kind hint to the churches of Kentucky, that they will "readily be spared" if they are not ready to submit in silence to the orders of their lordly brethren of the Satanic party at the North.

A Plausible and Dangerous Dogma Expounded.

"Slavery, if not dead is moribund, and therefore it is useless and vain to urge the duty of testifying against the infidel doctrine of abolitionism, and to insist upon the repeal of the anti-scriptural deliverances of the Assembly on this subject." Such is the form of argument now employed by those who have either openly or secretly aided in the unchristian crusade against the Church and word of God, which has deluged our land in blood, and threatens to overturn all the foundations of faith and social order. Flimsy and illogical and infidel as is this argument, it is just plausible enough to be liable to mislead those who are not in the habit of very accurate reasoning. A moment's reflection, however, on the part of such, will enable them to see how shallow is the plea thus put forward, for the maintenance of a heresy, that has wrought such havoc already, both in the Church and in the State, and of whose ruinous influences the end is not yet. The argument is based upon several most glaring assumptions of the correctness of principles which are false and ruinous. In the first place, it assumes that the teachings of God's word are true only when surrounding circumstances are in harmony with them, but when the multitude depart from those teachings, and by their traditions and commandments of men and wicked practices make void the Law, then the Law ceases to be true or binding, or its interpretation must be accommodated to the change. If the practice of men and their teaching are such as to kill the word of God, then it is to be considered dead, and to insist upon the truth of its teaching is useless. As, for example, amongst the Mormons, the institution of marriage as recognized in the Scriptures, is dead or moribund, and therefore the testifying against polygamy in Utah would be useless. In the second place, the argument assumes that the truth or falsehood of antagonistic principles can be determined by the sword. That the success of arms, superiority in the use of bayonets and bombshells, settles the doctrines for or against which the Church as God's witness is to testify. Thus according to the argument, Protestantism having been killed out by the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and it having thereby become manifest that God was on the side of Rome, those who still tried to bear testimony to the word of God, and to reform the Church in France, were rebellious schismatics and fools, trying to revive the effete, moribund, rotten carcass of a dead Protestantism. So, too when the right of the French nation to govern itself, and reject the house of Bourbon, was laid "moribund" upon the plains of Waterloo by the sword of England, Napoleonism was dead, and the doctrine of "legitimacy" was proved to be according to the will of God, and the Church ought to have required all those not in cordial sympathy with that doctrine, to repent or be cast out. In the third place, the argument is based upon the principle that the Church of God is to bear witness only to such parts of the revealed will of God, as from time to time may be recognized as His will by the dominant party in the Church, or community, and what is not so recognized is to be treated as a dead letter. This principle is

God in precisely the same deceitful manner as the Channings, the Emersons; the Park's and the Ballou's of New England.

But we have not time nor space to pursue this argument farther, nor is it indeed necessary. Its worse than absurdity cannot, we think, fail now to be detected by all our readers. Every one will see, that the simple duty of the Church is, to bear witness to what God had said, under all possible changes in times, seasons, states, kingdoms and parties; and this whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. So that, if the church had been seduced into false doctrine in regard to slavery or anything else, and through her teaching and an unlawful combination with the secular power, that false doctrine had become dominant in its influence, and the framework of society has been overturned and changed thereby, she is still guilty of bearing false witness for God so long as she adheres to such doctrine. And those who would not be partakers of her guilt and punishment, can only escape by clearly, constantly and faithfully "even unto death," testifying for the truth and against the falsehood.

The Western Presbyterian and the Declaration and Testimony.

We are glad to see that the "Western Presbyterian" has published in full the "Declaration and Testimony" signed by some twenty-five names, and adopted by the Presbytery of Louisville, at its late meeting at Bardonia. This Declaration seems to have scared the "strategists" at Danville pretty badly, judging from the many random shots they have fired at it without ever once hitting it. It is quite amusing to see how they fluster at a little straightforward remonstrance against the unscriptural and unconstitutional acts and deliverances of the General Assembly, when it appears in the form of a "Declaration and Testimony," though they may say "strategically" and sometimes confidentially, that they themselves disapprove of these acts, and characterize them as a departure from the ancient doctrine of the Church, but seem generally to be satisfied with simply calling these acts "unwise" and "inexpedient."

The last number of the "Western Presbyterian" reminds us of certain political journals, which, on the eve of some city election, are filled up with paragraphs urging their party to "vote early," to "look out for frauds," to "watch the polls," &c. &c. The "Western Presbyterian" has no less than six editorials telling their readers what naughty people the signers of this Declaration are, and what mischief they are plotting against the Church. They call upon the people to come to the rescue, and save the Ark of God from the pollution of these "schismatics," and give it into the hands of those who will guard its purity—though whether it will be done upon "strategy" or "principle," they do not affirm. We presume, however, that they only expect to guard it as it has been guarded by them for the past four years—for they hold out no promise of any improvement in their vigilance.

Strategists have sometimes overreached themselves; and we think our Danville brethren have accomplished that feat in this instance, in publishing the "Declaration and Testimony." They might have made their readers believe that this document was something very bad—something calculated to do much harm in the Church; but as they have published it, their attempt to weaken its force by such means, will only strengthen it, if their readers are capable of reasoning at all. And we are perfectly willing to let the document itself be an answer to all they have said against it.

We give our readers the headings of these editorials, which show that they are terribly alarmed by the powerful arguments set forth in the Declaration. They are as follows, to-wit: "The Declaration of War against the Church," "The Impending Secession," "A Word of Caution," "The People," "How is it?" "Louisville Presbytery." Now in all these articles there is not a single argument against the statements set forth in the Declaration; but they most lustily cry out Wolf! Wolf! But then they have been crying Wolf so long, that the people have ceased to believe them. And as they have published the Wolf, they have also published the fact that it is no Wolf after

ishment, and actual arrest and imprisonment, have prevented the attendance of the respectable members. But now that the bayonets have been withdrawn, the frothy ravings of fanaticism, and the self-righteous trumpeting of venal patriots, are drowned by the bold utterances of true Presbyterians, who, thank God! are free once more.

This action of our St. Louis brethren, is especially gratifying for the light it throws on a remarkable speech made in the late Assembly, by the Rev. S. J. Nicolls, a commissioner from that Presbytery. Advocating the claims of St. Louis to be the place in which the next Assembly should meet, he said, "We have got disloyalty down, in St. Louis; and we want you to come there and help us to keep it down."

Mr. Nicolls was somewhat premature: disloyalty was still rampant in St. Louis, as was evidenced by the fact that Mr. Nicolls and George P. Strong were delegates from there to the Assembly; but, now disloyalty in that Presbytery is down, down deep, as the papers to which we are calling attention most clearly show, and we have no doubt our brethren will keep it down, without any help from the General Assembly.

Mr. Nicolls' little speech was an unmitigated slander. We bespeak for him, however, the forbearance of our readers, on the ground that he seems to be singularly lacking in discretion, even for a young man; and, quite naturally, is puffed up with an exaggerated notion of the influence he can wield, since, by dint of the loyalty pressure, he has succeeded to what was once a commanding position. And though we have better use for our space, we do not begrudge him the suggestion that, as he is a newcomer in that field, a little spell of modest silence would afford him an opportunity to become better acquainted with the men whom he has so savagely assailed (behind their backs). Perhaps they can rightfully lay claim to a very moderate share of honesty. It is barely possible they can give some dim, smoking-flax evidences of piety. And certainly they can teach him good breeding, and some other things, such as truthfulness, &c.

Is It Shortness of Memory, or Something else?

"We deny," says the *Presbyter*, "the charges all and singular in this Declaration and Testimony." This is a short and convenient method of disposing of a serious indictment, which cannot be so easily controverted by evidence. But a flat denial ought always to be cautiously made. It is so easy to say "We deny," and so convenient sometimes. And then if the denial is proved to be in contradiction of the acts, or utterances of the party making it, men are apt to suspect something else than the weakness of a failing memory, as the cause of such contradiction. We do not know what is the solution of this extraordinary denial of the *Presbyter*, but in view of the recorded facts, it needs some solution. For example, one of the charges denied is this: "We testify against the sanction which has been given, both directly and indirectly, to the usurpation, by the secular and military power, of authority in and over the worship and government of the Church." This charge, says Dr. Monfort, is false. Softly, Doctor, do not be too hasty.—Here is the record of a certain "Presbytery of Cincinnati," *et pluribus unum* of a series of like Resolutions passed in 1864, and addressed to "His Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States."

Resolved, 4. That to this end, this Presbytery most earnestly requests, and hereby petitions his excellency, the President of the United States, to direct forthwith by a general and uniform order, that in every point, and in all our reclaimed territory, the military authorities allow no minister, church session, or trustees, to hold and use any church edifice or church property, hitherto in connection with and under the control of the General Assembly, (Old School) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, until the same shall first renounce the authority of, and all connection with, the General Assembly of the South, which first organized in Dec. 1861, in Augusta, Ga., and shall agree and promise to hold the same henceforth subject to the authorities of the churches in connection with the General Assembly of the United States—which declaration shall be duly recorded; and provided those holding said property in any given locality, refuse thus to renounce the authority of the rebel church, it shall be given to those who may loyally hold and use it, subject to the control of the proper church authority in connection with and under the supervision of our

